


15 December 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel Policy, Planning, and Management

STATINTL FROM

: 
Special Assistant to the Deputy Director

SUBJECT : Midcareer Course Suggestions on Personnel Management
and Overseas Service Incentives

Handwritten signature

1. Last week, I met with the Midcareer Course. They had prepared a number of issue papers on what they considered key current problems as part of their course work and presented the issues to me at that session. Attached are two papers with some interesting suggestions.

2. Would you please have one of your staff review these and, at a minimum, call the team heads listed and thank them, give them a response, etc.

Thanks.



STATINTL

Attachments:
As stated

THE CASE FOR A DUAL-TRACK CAREER STRUCTURE

If the Agency's most important resource is its people, then its heart and soul must be the mid-career professionals. Our Agency expends significant funds to locate, acquire, and train people. Although most of them contribute to the Agency's mission early on, the real return on the investment often does not occur until well into their careers.

We lack the data to make a definitive statement, but it appears from our vantage point that the Agency is losing a sizable, if not major, part of the potential output of its mid-careerists. Several causes for this loss are apparent. Mid-careerists are leaving the Agency for other employment. While some attrition is therapeutic and to be striven for, excessive attrition is wasteful. Further, among those who remain, a growing number of mid-careerists face limits on their promotion potential that are often accompanied by frustration and stagnation. The underlying causes of attrition and stagnation are many. However, we suspect that the Agency's concept of career progression may be paramount.

Two principal tenets shape or guide the career progression of the Agency's professional, these being the development of generalists from specialists and the recruitment of managers from the ranks of substantive professionals. These tenets may be inter alia an acceptable method for identifying senior Agency managers but they are not without negative impact. The loss of mid-careerists with special

expertise is disruptive particularly in this age when the issues we face continue to grow in complexity. Moreover, the skills which earmark the successful substantive professional are not necessarily the skills which define the successful manager. The negative impact may be further magnified if the professional faced with such a progression is becoming a generalist or manager to win promotion only.

The Agency appears to be taking the first tentative steps toward addressing this problem. For example, the Director of NFAC and his staff are establishing a limited number of "super analyst" positions. While this step certainly represents an important effort, we feel it should be just the beginning. In this regard we recommend that the following be undertaken:

- That the Agency, through the Office of Training and Education or Personnel Policy, Planning and Management, conduct a thorough study of the attitudes of mid-careerists, particularly those who are leaving the Agency, as they relate to the lack of dual-track opportunities;
- That the Agency establish at the branch level, the formal position(s) of "senior analyst" or "technical advisor" as appropriate. (This recommendation, as does the following, assumes that the study above will show wide-spread concern over the lack of dual-track opportunities);
- That the Agency establish a grade structure, applicable down to the first line manager, that clearly identifies managers

from substantive professionals. (The purpose of this recommendation is to avoid situations in which the general schedule grade of the manager effectively limits the grade potential of his subordinates. If both are covered under different systems then there can be no direct correlation of grades).

*THEIR
MUST
BE
SOME
CORRELATION.*

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM:

Deputy Director for Policy
and Evaluation
1006 Ames

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

14 January 1981

STATOTHR

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. Chief, PMCD
1016 Ames

19 JAN 1981

2.

Gene,

STATINT

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15.

Per our discussion, contacted [redacted] the team leader on the attached paper. Told him that we would be reviewing his team's work for possible input in developing specialist positions. Also briefed him on the status of the senior analyst program in NFAC. He seemed to appreciate the feedback.

Pete
Pete

Don
Don't believe
and additional
would is required
since Pete called
(Tent)

FORM
1-79610 USE PREVIOUS
EDITIONS